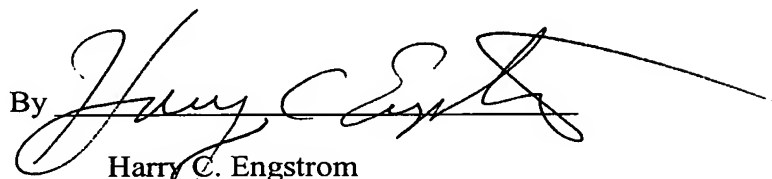


The Office Action indicated that the inventions of Groups II and I are related as process of making and the product made. The Office Action noted that unpatentability of the Group I invention would not necessarily imply unpatentability of the Group II invention, since the device of the Group I invention could be made by processes materially different from those of the Group II invention.

The Claims of Group I -- independent Claim 21 and Claims 22-25 dependent thereon -- are directed to a nano-mechanical structure with at least one cross-sectional dimension of 500nm or less, supported on a layer of sacrificial material and connected to a larger structural element and spaced by an opening from an adjacent structure, and a film of carbon material covering at least a portion of the structural feature and extending over the opening between and connecting the structural feature and the adjacent structure. The process claims of the present invention are directed to producing nano-mechanical structures covered with a film as claimed in the product claims. Thus, Groups I and II are closely related to each other, and are directed to the same basic subject matter, not to unrelated or distinctively different subject matter. A search directed to the process of producing the nano-mechanical structures will necessarily overlap with a search directed to the structures themselves. It is thus submitted that the claims of both groups are most appropriately and efficiently considered together in the same application, and reconsideration of the restriction requirement is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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